

"We have the honor to notify you that he will open the fire of his Batteries"

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

April 12, 2011

Today is the 150th anniversary of the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, which began the U.S. Civil War. In a fascinating [entry](#) from the *New York Times* "[Disunion](#)" series, which has been "covering" the war since last fall, Adam Goodheart describes how Maj. Robert Anderson, commander of the fort's garrison, learned of the attack. Two Confederate aides handed him this note:

Sir

By authority of Brig

General Beauregard commanding the provisional forces of the Confederate States

we have the honor to notify you that he will open the fire of his Batteries on Fort Sumter in one hour from this time.

We have the honor to be

Very Respectfully

Yrobtservts,

James Chesnut Jr., Aide de Camp

Stephen D. Lee, Capt.,
S.C. Army, Aide de Camp

Anderson then escorted them to their boat and said, "If we never meet in this world again, God grant that we may meet in the next."

The subject of religion and the Civil War is certainly a complicated one, addressed perhaps most notably in recent years [by Mark Noll](#). *Metro Lutheran* has an interesting [piece](#) on Lutherans on both sides of the war, and *USA Today* offers a thoughtful [take](#) on a familiar argument: that the Bible has too often been "used to defend what history later determined was indefensible."